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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/540,922	06/29/2005	Morita Toshiaki	2946-192	8667
6449	7590	07/31/2007		
ROTHWELL, FIGG, ERNST & MANBECK, P.C. 1425 K STREET, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20005			EXAMINER DEXTER, CLARK F	
			ART UNIT 3724	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 07/31/2007	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

PTO-PAT-Email@rfem.com

ED

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/540,922	Applicant(s) TOSHIAKI, MORITA	
	Examiner Clark F. Dexter	Art Unit 3724	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 May 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 13 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 June 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendments filed on April 5, 2007 and May 10, 2007 have been entered.

Election/Restrictions

2. Newly submitted claim 13 is directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons:

- I. Claims 10-12, drawn to a method of cutting sheet members with heating, classified in class 83, subclass 15.
- II. Claim 13, drawn to a method of cutting sheet members with multiple cutting steps, classified in class 83, subclass 39.

3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

4. Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct if they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants, and if it is shown that at least one subcombination is separately usable. In the instant case, the subcombination of Group I has separate utility such as without the additional cutting step of Group II. Conversely, the subcombination of Group II has separate utility such as without the heating step of Group I. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

5. The examiner has required restriction between subcombinations usable together. Where applicant elects a subcombination and claims thereto are subsequently found allowable, any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the

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allowable subcombination will be examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. See MPEP § 821.04(a). Applicant is advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, a claim that is allowable in the present application, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application.

6. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction is not required because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction is not required because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art due to their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claim 13 has been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

9. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gerber, pn 4,653,362.

Gerber discloses a method of cutting sheet members with every step of the claimed invention including:

- a) stacking a plurality of sheet members (e.g., see Fig. 2) having air impermeability;
- b) fixing the sheet members by vacuum suction (e.g., see col. 3, lines 42-49);
- c) locally heating (e.g., by frictional heating as described in col. 5, lines 31-42, and by supplemental heating as described in col. 5, line 43 - col. 6, line 9, which can fuse the sheets together as described in col. 6, lines 24) a seam allowance of pattern pieces, or a region outside the seam allowance, near a cutting line by frictional heat (e.g., col. 5, lines 31-42) between the sheet members and a knife or a punch of a cutting head, to weld the sheet members together vertically to fix upper and lower sheet members; and
- d) cutting (e.g., using blade 30) the sheet members along a predetermined cutting line along the pattern pieces;

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gerber 4,654,362.

Gerber discloses a method of cutting sheet members with almost every step of the claimed invention but lacks:

[claim 11] wherein the local heating step includes locally heating along a region slightly outside the cutting line at a plurality of positions for each piece;

[claim 12] wherein the local heating step includes locally heating in the seam allowance inside the cutting line at a plurality of positions for each piece.

However, to provide local heating along a region inside or slightly outside the cutting line, for example by making the cut with the disclosed knife along a region inside or slightly outside the cutting line would have been an obvious matter of design choice based on a desired cutting design and/or pattern and therefore obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art.

Response to Arguments

12. Applicant's arguments filed April 5, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In the paragraph bridging pages 5-6 of the subject amendment, applicant states that the sheet members are welded before cutting. However, it is respectfully submitted that such a method is not required to meet claim 10. Rather, claim 10 includes steps a-

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d, wherein step c is a heating step and step d is a cutting step. However, the claims do not specify any order in which the steps are performed.

Further in the paragraph bridging pages 5-6 of the subject amendment, applicant states that applicant teaches away from the combination of welding the sheet members and then cutting the members. However, as stated above the claims do not specify any order in which the steps are performed. Further, Gerber teaches welding of the sheets together, for example in col. 6, lines 19-21. It is noted that although Gerber teaches that such welding is not desirable, the method is still taught by Gerber.

Conclusion

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Clark F. Dexter whose telephone number is (571)272-4505. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Boyer D. Ashley can be reached on (571)272-4502. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Clark F. Dexter
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3724

cf
July 23, 2007